

## **Bolsover District Council**

### **Report of HR & OD Manager**

#### **Sickness Absence Quarter 1 (April – June 2021)**

##### **1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To report the sickness absence figures throughout the Council for Quarter 1, (April – June 2021).

##### **2. Issues for Consideration**

- 2.1 Figure 1 shows a summary of sickness absence levels within Bolsover District Council for the months April to June 2021.
- 2.2 Absence for the Senior Managers Group is shown as 50% of the total absence for Joint Senior Managers as this is split with Bolsover/NE Derbyshire District Council. For other employees the absences included are for the employing authority only.
- 2.3 The average number of days lost per employee for Quarter 1 was **1.91 days**
- 2.4 The projected 2022/21 outturn figure for the average number of days lost per employee is **7.64 days**.
- 2.5 The annual target for the Local Performance Indicator to the end of March 2022 is **8.5 days**.
- 2.6 For the purposes of sickness reporting, following recent restructures Senior Management is split as follows
- 1 x Joint Director (2 x 0.5 fte), 1 x Director (BDC), 1 Assistant Director (BDC only), 1.5 x Joint Heads of Service (3 x 0.5 fte), 0.5 Joint Assistant Director (1 X 0.5 fte) and 4 x Heads of Service (BDC). There was 14 days sickness (50% which equates to 7 days for BDC reporting purposes) experienced during Quarter 1.

### 3. Summary of Key Corporate Trends

The following tables detail the key pattern and trends being experienced corporately in relation to sickness absence.

Table One: Organisational Outturn Average Number of Days Absence  
(Average sickness days per fte employee)

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>Current Year Costs</b>
<b>Quarter One</b>	2.23	1.85	1.50	1.91	£81917.94
<b>Quarter Two</b>	1.86	1.84	1.35		
<b>Quarter Three</b>	2.52	2.43	1.14		
<b>Quarter Four</b>	2.09	1.68	1.58		
<b>Overall Outturn</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>5.57</b>		

Table Two: Organisational Long Term/Short Term Split Days Percentage

	<b>2018/19</b>		<b>2019/20</b>		<b>2020/21</b>		<b>2021/22</b>	
	Short term	Long Term	Short term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term
<b>Quarter One</b>	34.0%	66.0%	43%	57%	33%	67%	40%	60.0%
<b>Quarter Two</b>	35.0%	65.0%	54%	46%	37%	63%		
<b>Quarter Three</b>	32.4%	67.6%	44.8%	55.2%	47.1%	52.9%		
<b>Quarter Four</b>	43.6%	56.4%	60.1%	39.9%	42.90%	57.10%		
<b>Overall Outturn</b>	<b>36.25%</b>	<b>63.75%</b>	<b>48.1%</b>	<b>51.9%</b>	<b>40.71%</b>	<b>59.29%</b>		

**Table Three: Number of Long Term/Short Term Cases**  
*(long and short term occurrences of sickness in the quarter)*

	<b>2018/19</b>		<b>2019/20</b>		<b>2020/21</b>		<b>2021/22</b>	
	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term
<b>Quarter One</b>	104	18	94	15	48	15	90	15
<b>Quarter Two</b>	85	14	87	11	50	11		
<b>Quarter Three</b>	98	21	102	14	48	6		
<b>Quarter Four</b>	103	14	90	9	57	10		
<b>Overall Outturn</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>42</b>		

**Table Four: Top Three Services Proportionately Experiencing Highest Levels of Absence**  
*(The three service areas who have the highest average fte employee sickness absence days in the quarter)*

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Current Year 2021/22</b>
<b>Quarter One</b>	1.Customer Services 2.Property/Estates 3.Housing/CS	1.Elections 2.Customer Services 3.CEO/Dir/HoS	1. Leaders/Exec.Team 2. Legal 3. Planning	1. Elections 2.Democratic 3.Streetscene
<b>Quarter Two</b>	1. Customer Services 2. Elections 3 .Revs & Bens	1.Customer Services 2.Revs & Bens 3.Housing	1. Dev/Bus. Growth 2. Elections 3. Housing Repairs	1. 2. 3.
<b>Quarter Three</b>	1. Elections 2..HR/Payroll/H&S 3 CEO/Dir/HoS	1. Customer Services 2.HR/Health & Safety 3. Revs & Bens	1. Elections 2. Streetscene 3. Democratic Services	1. 2. 3.
<b>Quarter Four</b>	1. CEO/Dir/HoS 2. Democratic 3. Customer Services	1.Legal 2.Revs & Bens 3.Partnership	1. Elections 2. Governance 3. Customer Services	1. 2. 3.
<b>Overall Outturn</b>	<b>1. Customer Services</b> <b>2 .CEO/Dir/HoS</b> <b>3. HR &amp;Payroll</b>	<b>1.Customer Services</b> <b>2.Comms</b> <b>3.Housing/CS</b>	<b>1. Elections</b> <b>2. Democratic</b> <b>3. LEPT</b>	<b>1.</b> <b>2.</b> <b>3.</b>

Table Five: Top Three Services Proportionately Experiencing Lowest Level of Absence

*(The three service areas who have the lowest average fte employee sickness absence days in the quarter)*

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Current Year 2021/22</b>
<b>Quarter One</b>	1. HR & Payroll 2. Elections 3. Procurement	1. Performance 2. HR& HS 3. Econ Dev	1. Finance 2. Democratic 3. Customer Services	1. Human Resources 2. Revs. & Bens 3. Customer Services
<b>Quarter Two</b>	1. Perf/Comms 2. CEPT 3. Econ Growth	1. Legal 2. Governance 3. HR&Health& Safety	1. Finance 2. Revs & Bens 3. Directors/HofS	1. 2. 3.
<b>Quarter Three</b>	1. Procurement 2. Partnerships 3. Finance	1. Elections 2. Performance 3. Econ Dev	1. Finance 2. Customer Services 3. Property & Estates	1. 2. 3.
<b>Quarter Four</b>	1. Finance 2. Partnerships 3. Procurement	1. Elections 2. Econ Dev 3. Legal	1. Finance 2. Planning 3. LEPT	1. 2. 3.
<b>Overall Outturn</b>	<b>1. Procurement</b> <b>2. Finance</b> <b>3. CEPT</b>	<b>1. Performance</b> <b>2. Econ Dev</b> <b>3. Planning</b>	<b>1. Finance</b> <b>2. Directors/HofS</b> <b>3. Property &amp; Estates</b>	<b>1.</b> <b>2.</b> <b>3.</b>

Table Six: Top Three Reasons for Absence

*(Top 3 reasons based on sickness days lost)*

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Current Year 21/22</b>
<b>Quarter One</b>	1. Stress/Depression 2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3. Other	1. Viral Infection 2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3. Other	1. Stress/Depression 2. Other 3. Headaches/Migraines	1. Stress/Depression 2. Other Musc Skeletal 3. Operations/Hospital
<b>Quarter Two</b>	1. Stress/Depression 2. Other Musc Skeletal 3. Other	1. Stress/Depression 2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3. Chest/Respiratory	1. Operations/Hospital 2. Other-Musc Skeletal 3. Stress/Depression	1. 2. 3.
<b>Quarter Three</b>	1. Other Musc. Skeletal 2. Operations/Hosp 3. Stress/Depression	1. Stress/Depression 2. Chest/Respiratory 3. Other Musc. Skel	1. Other Musc. Skel 2. Stress/Depression 3. COVID 19 Symptoms	1. 2. 3.
<b>Quarter Four</b>	1. Ops/Hospital	1. Stress/Depression	1. Stress/Depression	1.

	2. Stress/Depression 3. Viral	2. COVID19 Symptoms 3. Other Musc. Skel	2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3. Operations/Hospital	2. 3.
<b>Overall Outturn</b>	<b>1. Other Musc Skeletal</b> <b>2. Stress/Depression</b> <b>3. Back Problems</b>	<b>1. Stress/Depression</b> <b>2. Other Musc. Skel</b> <b>3. Operations/Hospital</b>	<b>1. Other Musc. Skeletal</b> <b>2. Stress/Depression</b> <b>3. Operations/Hospital</b>	<b>1.</b> <b>2.</b> <b>3.</b>

### Key Trends

- Sickness levels for Quarter 1 2021/22 are at their highest since Quarter 1 of 2018/19.
- 6 Services experienced zero sickness in Quarter 1 and a further 7 Services have experienced less than 1 day per FTE employee.
- Stress/depression remains consistently high, most cases are as a result of non-work related issues. Steps the Council has taken to support employees include:
  - Mental Health awareness sessions have been rolled out across the Council and are now included on the quarterly corporate training programme
  - Resilience Training rolled out in April, made available to managers and employees to support workforce mental and physical health
  - Health and Wellbeing Bulletins have been issued on a monthly and bi-weekly basis during the pandemic
  - Managers and Employees have accessed Occupational Health, Counselling, Employee Assistance Programme and other support.
- There appears to be a direct correlation between employees aged over 50 undertaking physically demanding work and high levels of sickness.
- There were 70 days lost in quarter 1 due to Covid19 symptoms (employees reporting unfit for work).
- In comparison to Quarter 4 2020/21, Quarter 1 2021/22 has reduced Short Term sickness and increased Long Term sickness cases.
- Analysis work has been undertaken on whether the lockdown periods have increased specific sickness issues. There has been an increase in days lost due to stress and depression and other muscular/skeletal. The Council continues to be proactive in supporting employees whatever the reason.
- Possible factors which may be impacting on sickness include:
  - Housing Repairs, Streetscene and Customer Services have maintained service provision throughout the lockdown periods. Sickness levels in terms of days lost have reduced significantly in Customer Services and Housing Repairs However they have increased within the Streetscene.

- Many employees have been working at home therefore limiting personal interaction and adhering to social distancing practices, resulting in less infections being transmitted between employees leading to reduced sickness. This is reinforced by significant reductions across the range of short term absences and specific sickness reasons such as Viral Infections and Chest/Respiratory issues.
- There is also the possibility that in some cases employees may not have reported poor health as they were working at home.

## 5. Actions

- 5.1 Managers have support from dedicated service area HR Link Officers and are issued monthly sickness absence information. Managers are also able to access sickness information for their teams' on a daily basis via HR21 Self Service.
- 5.2 Support for managers and employees is provided by Occupational Health where appropriate and employees have access to a 24 hour, 7 days a week Employee Assistance Programme where confidential advice is provided on a range of issues
- 5.3 Operational concerns about the management of sickness absence cases that exist are being raised with the respective managers and dealt with as per standard practice and policy.

## Recommendations

- 6.1 To note the contents of this report

## **Appendix One: Summary Figures for the Quarter by Directorate/Service**

**Figure One – Service Breakdown Short/Long Term Split**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Short term days</b>	<b>No. of Employees absent</b>	<b>Long term days</b>	<b>No. of Employees Absent</b>	<b>Total Days lost</b>	<b>FTE No. in Section</b>	<b>Average days lost per FTE</b>
Directors and Heads of Service	7	1	0	0	7	9	0.78
Democratic	0	0	37	1	37	6.51	5.68
Elections	0	0	65	1	65	4	16.25
Health & Safety	1	1	0	0	1	5	0.2
Human Resources	0	0	0	0	0	2.43	0
Legal	0	0	0	0	0	8.69	0
Communications	0	0	0	0	0	5	0
Performance	0	0	0	0	0	2.82	0
Finance	0	0	0	0	0	12.42	0
Revenues & Benefits	10	6	0	0	10	28.38	0.35
Customer Services	9	5	0	0	9	21.67	0.41
Leisure	20	12	0	0	20	41.27	0.48
Leaders/Executive Team	5	1	0	0	5	9.32	0.54
Streetscene	197.5	43	212	6	409.5	97.82	4.19
Development/Business Growth	16	5	0	0	16	9.3	1.72
Housing Management (including CS)	22	6	102	4	124	63.04	1.97
Housing Repairs (BDC)	23	7	28	1	51	61	0.84
Planning	12	2	0	0	12	19.05	0.63
Prop/Commercial/Estates	1	1	44	2	45	17.09	2.63

**FOR INFORMATION ONLY – EMPLOYEES HOSTED BY NEDDC**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Short term Days</b>	<b>No. of Employees absent</b>	<b>Long term days</b>	<b>No. of Employees absent</b>	<b>Total Days lost</b>	<b>FTE No. in Section</b>	<b>Average days lost per FTE</b>
Environmental Health	4	3	22	1	26	40.78	0.64
ICT	3	2	21	1	24	30.95	0.78

**Figure Two: Directorate Breakdown Short/Long Term Split**

<b>Directorate</b>	<b>No. of FTE Employees</b>	<b>Short term days</b>	<b>No of employees absent</b>		<b>Long term Days</b>	<b>No of employees absent</b>
Directors/Heads of Service	9	7	1		0	0
Corporate Services	147.51	45	25		102	2
Development BDC	106.44	52	15		72	3
Env/Enforcement	160.86	219.5	49		314	10



**Figure Three: Top Three Reasons for Absence per Directorate***(Top 3 reasons based on sickness days lost – Also include the number of employees in brackets in each directorate)*

Directorate	No. of FTE Employees	Top 3 Reasons for Absences
Directors/Heads of Service	9 (9)	1.Stomach/Kidney/Liver
Corporate Services	147.51 (186)	1. Other and Viral Infection and Genito-Urinary 2. Pregnancy Related 3. Other Mus/Skel. and Stomach/Kidney/Liver
Development	106.44 (120)	1. Operations/Hospital 2. Stress/Depression 3. Other Musc. Skeletal
Env/Enforcement	160.86 (175)	1. Other Musc. Skeletal 2. COVID 19 Symptoms 3. Headaches & Migraines

**Figure Four: Stress Cases During Quarter One**

Work Related	Outside of Work Related	Total
1	8	9

**Figure Five: COVID-19 During Quarter One and Totals for 2021/22**

Quarter 1	The Arc	Depot Based	Grouped Dwellings	Remote Contact Centres	Total
No Self-Isolating	3	13	0	0	16
No Shielding	0	0	0	0	0
No of confirmed cases	0	8	0	1	9

No of Covid symptoms related absence days	0	69	0	1	70
--	---	----	---	---	----